

# Durham Gilesgate Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114211
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	338316
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Petts

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Dennis Southwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Turner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Kepier Crescent Gilesgate Durham DH1 1PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 384 7284
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed nine class teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, analysed 59 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The team also looked at development plans, data on pupils' progress, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, the school's policies and procedures, scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the School Improvement Partner to discuss her reports.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the current achievement, rates and patterns of progress and the attainment for all groups of pupils, including resource-based pupils
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the progress that children make, the quality of outdoor learning and the quality of leadership and management and its impact on children's learning and achievement
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in building the capacity to secure and sustain improvements in achievement and accelerate the rate of progress for all pupils.

## Information about the school

Durham Gilesgate is a smaller- than- average school. Most pupils are from a White British background with a very small number learning English as an additional language. There is an attached resource provision for up to 15 pupils, all of whom are profoundly deaf. As a consequence, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is six times the average. Across the whole school the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the average. The school is part of a national pilot scheme which enables all pupils to access free school meals. The Early Years Foundation Stage includes school-initiated outreach provision, supported by the local authority, to meet the needs of Nursery-aged children with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are a very small number of looked after children. A new Chair of Governors was appointed in January 2010. The school has achieved the Investing in Children and the International School Intermediate awards.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Gilesgate is a satisfactory school. It is an inclusive school which cares for its pupils really well. Strong determination by the leadership team to raise standards is beginning to take effect. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the positive ethos and warmly praise the commitment of staff and the ease with which all can be approached. Consequently, the school enjoys their full trust and confidence. The comment, 'The headteacher and staff do an excellent job proactively enabling my child to be included in all school life,' sums up their views.

Although great care is taken to engage all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their progress is not as good as it could be because there is not enough focus on ensuring that children learn at a good rate and achieve well. In Years 1 to 6 all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those new to learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Those pupils who are profoundly deaf and those with hearing impairment make good progress and achieve well because of the expert support they receive. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is typically low but can vary from cohort to cohort. The average attainment of the pupils currently in Year 6 is an improvement because teaching is more carefully matched to their needs thus quickening progress and raising achievement. While some good teaching was observed, in a majority of lessons teachers' expectations of what can be achieved is not high enough and challenge and pace in lessons are too variable. The use of assessment information to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs is improving, but this is not consistent and marking, although positive and encouraging, does not always identify exactly how pupils can improve. Staff provide help and sensitive support to ensure that pupils' personal development is good. In a warm, friendly atmosphere, good and sometimes excellent relationships are a feature. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to take responsibility, show initiative and take care of others. Pupils display a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy.

Members of the leadership team have a sound view of the school's strengths and areas for development and are strengthening action to tackle weaknesses. They are committed to providing high-quality care for all pupils. The recent appointment of a new Chair of Governors, coupled with effective partnership working, has given a boost to the drive for improvement, such as taking robust action to improve attendance and providing more settled management of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Systems are in place to evaluate the quality of learning but are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure consistently good teaching to quicken rates of progress and raise achievement. The school demonstrates a satisfactory though strengthening capacity to improve further.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching, especially in literacy and numeracy, to accelerate rates of progress by:
  - raising the expectations of all staff of what pupils can achieve
  - making better use of assessment information in lesson planning and marking to ensure that all pupils are provided with activities that stretch them
  - systematically sharing the good practice that exists in the school.
- Sharpen whole-school approaches to improve the quality of learning by:
  - developing more focused techniques to monitoring the impact of action taken to raise achievement
  - increasing the rigour of self-evaluation to ensure that all initiatives have the intended impact in raising achievement.
- Improve the drive and effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure a clear focus on helping all children to make at least good progress and achieve well in their learning.
- About 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Pupils generally enjoy their learning and display positive attitudes to school. In lessons where learning is more active and lively, they are eager to think for themselves and answer challenging, open-ended questions. Their achievement is satisfactory from low starting points, although progress is uneven across ages. Over three years, attainment by the end of Year 6 has been low. Current progress information supported by inspection evidence points to current Year 6 pupils making faster progress to reach broadly average attainment. Very good teaching in Year 6 ensures that pupils are motivated, engaged and challenged. The numbers reaching higher levels is expected to match national averages. However, the rate of progress in Years 1 to 5 is more variable because teaching is not always stimulating enough and does not always stretch pupils' thinking and broaden their skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Profoundly deaf pupils make consistently good progress because staff set high expectations of what they can achieve and provide tough challenges and well-targeted individual support. Positive action to raise achievement and accelerate progress is meeting with some success, for example following the introduction of new writing initiatives, but the pattern remains uneven as not all activities are well enough tailored to meet individuals' needs.

The good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development provides a secure basis for pupils' good personal development. Pupils report that they feel safe and are taught how to be safety conscious. They particularly enjoy learning when they can work in small

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groups to solve problems and exchange ideas and views. Behaviour is good, with older pupils particularly considerate towards younger children and disabled pupils. They understand the benefits that keeping fit and eating healthily can bring. They are keen to take on responsibilities, for example acting as school councillors, and take pride in their achievements. They enjoy learning about life in Lesotho from visiting teachers. Currently, the headteacher is extending links with other schools to broaden pupils' understanding of other cultures and beliefs.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

In those lessons which are more active and demanding, activities are carefully shaped to match abilities and needs. Pupils become engrossed as their thinking is systematically challenged using thought-provoking questions. This encourages them to think for themselves and use their skills to respond to problems. When progress is slower, tasks are often unexciting and lacking in demand, making learning passive. Assessment information does not consistently inform lesson planning nor is it used to give clear, helpful suggestions for improvement. The quality of intervention and support is

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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sometimes variable, although specialist support is effectively personalised to meet the often testing needs of individuals.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with an appropriate emphasis on basic skills. Recent action has led to more creative approaches to hold interest, link subjects together and extend opportunities to teach literacy skills across the curriculum, for example when pupils wrote about summer seaside experiences. Good provision is made for personal development, including the use of visits, visitors and partnership activities with local schools, to give added direct experience and provoke interest.

Care and support for all pupils is good. In the resource-based provision it is excellent. The school works very successfully with outside agencies to provide effective support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or for those from challenging circumstances. This includes enhancing outreach provision for younger children. Intervention to support personal needs is good overall and outstanding for the profoundly deaf. Good support is provided during transition to secondary school settings. The breakfast club provides positive opportunities for social and emotional development each morning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and well respected by pupils, parents and carers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are central to creating a calm, purposeful atmosphere where all pupils are valued. Senior leaders recognise that the issues that hinder the pace of improvement require determined action to secure sustained improvement. They correctly recognise the significance of making certain that teaching inspires, stimulates and is always at least good. Firm action has successfully improved attendance levels. Effective systems are in place to check pupils' progress methodically, spot any slips and provide additional help and challenge to accelerate progress and boost achievement, but practice is not yet embedded in lessons. Governors are committed and supportive. They appreciate the benefits of being fully involved, evaluating school outcomes and providing quality assurance checking. Middle leaders' skills are being fostered so that they can add to the drive for improvement.

Safeguarding procedures and requirements are met with appropriate policies, procedures and training to ensure that pupils are safe. Relationships with parents and carers are good and the school works hard to involve them in their children's learning.

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Good partnerships with a range of schools and services, including local authority specialists, enhance outcomes for pupils and their families. The happy and friendly atmosphere reflects the school's hard work in promoting inclusion but senior leaders acknowledge that pupils can achieve more. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily with good local links and developing provision to broaden pupils' understanding of other beliefs and cultures.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Most children enter Nursery with skills at levels that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in speech and language. Children make satisfactory progress with most working towards the levels expected of them by the time they start Year 1. Despite the good care they receive, staff's questioning does not consistently trigger their curiosity and thinking. Opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce the focus on seeing, listening and speaking to help early reading and writing. Profoundly deaf children and those with partial hearing supported by outreach staff often make good and very good progress. Children settle confidently and quickly into routines. They enjoy very good relationships with adults because children are well supported. This helps boost confidence, especially those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, as they play and learn happily together and develop independence. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving with helpful specialist early years support. The practice of completing regular observations and assessments to help identify what children know and can do is being systematically embedded but is not yet making certain that activities provide the challenge that children need. They enjoy exploring and investigating



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outdoors although, despite good provision, not all opportunities are taken to exploit free flow. Children listen well and staff’s questioning provokes curiosity but there is scope for additional challenge to draw out thinking and broaden knowledge. The very good relationships with parents and carers help support children's development well. Staff, including outreach staff, are committed and work conscientiously together. Welfare requirements are met to ensure that children are kept safe and secure. The provision is competently led and managed but lacks sufficient rigour to ensure that all children achieve as well as they can.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### **Views of parents and carers**

Close to one third of parents and carers returned the questionnaire providing their views of the school. Almost all of those were positive in their views about all aspects of its work and all felt that their children are safe and happy in school. Inspectors agree with many of the positive views expressed but found that more needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Durham Gilesgate Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	69	17	29	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	61	23	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	36	37	63	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	36	37	63	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	47	30	51	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	41	34	58	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	49	26	44	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	31	37	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	49	25	42	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	44	26	44	2	3	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	42	29	49	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	47	26	44	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	44	33	56	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



05 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Durham Gilesgate Primary School, Durham, DH1 1PH

I want to thank you all for the very friendly welcome that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our time talking to you all.

Gilesgate is a satisfactory school and it is improving. It has a number of good features. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the good care taken of you. You obviously feel safe and confident because of this. You understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Very good links the school's staff enjoy with your parents and carers help to boost how well you achieve. Some of you told us that your teachers make your learning interesting. Your school is taking action to improve and this can be seen as your attainment rises and your attendance improves. Although profoundly deaf and hearing impaired children make good progress, in some classes your achievement isn't high enough and your rate of progress is uneven.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to look at ways of raising your achievement and speeding up the progress you make, especially improving your literacy and numeracy skills. For example, they can look at making more of your learning active and interesting and giving you more tips to improve. We have also asked that the school carefully check how well you are doing so that staff can plan more effectively. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy the interesting activities provided for them. We have asked the school to improve the day-to-day running of Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that more of you can make faster progress learning new skills. This will help you achieve more.

You can play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can and continuing to attend regularly. Thank you for helping with this inspection. I hope the school will continue to improve. We wish you the best of luck for your future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts

Lead inspector

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